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SLAVERY QUESTION.

SPEECH

OF

MR. EDWARD WADE, OF OHIO,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

AUGUST 2, 1856.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

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SPEECH OF MR. WADE.

The House being in committee of the whole on the state of the union—

Mr. WADE said: I propose to say a few things on the old theme of which, we have all heard so much—the subject of slavery and the threatened dissolution of the union. These two seem to constitute a sort of duality—a “two in one” subject, as inseparable as the Siamese twins.

A part of what I have to say, will be with the intention of calling the minds of gentlemen, to the purer and better days of the republic—to contrast those days with the present, and try if we can search out the old landmarks of constitutional liberty, and from these, to determine how far we may have wandered into the domains of despotism. At this day, and under the perils to which liberty and the union are exposed, I believe this to be the most acceptable service which a patriot can render to his country.

I desire sir if it be possible, to reproduce before the people of this day, the living realities of those purer and better days, when the union and the constitution had their birth. For, sir, it is in the spirit only in which the union and constitution were organized, that they can be preserved, if preserved at all. If the ethical principles in which the union and constitution were brought into being, were the principles of despotism, of human bondage—if the spirit which presided at their birth, was the cold and sunless spirit of a crushing despotism, then in the perpetuity of that fell spirit, will rest their only peace and permanency. But if, on the other hand, the union and constitution were produced from the gentle, genial spirit of liberty, and the changeless natural equality of human rights, then in the same spirit, must they be administered, to be perpetuated. No self-evident axiom, no demonstration in mathematics, is more convincing than this. Gentlemen may tell us—they do tell us—that, in order to preserve the union, we must throw the rein over the neck of despotism—must yield to the necessities or to the caprices of slavery. Sir, doing this, is a dissolution of the union. Its life expires the moment we yield to this senseless clamor. Sir, in order to preserve the union, ne-

cessity is laid upon us, to go back to the birth of the union prior to the constitution, and to catch and hold the spirit which animated those great and good men, and apply it now, and for all time, to the administration of the government. In no other way, sir, is it possible to preserve this government. It will bear no other treatment, more than man's natural body can bear strychnine or arsenic.

Sir, if the constitution and union are to be used merely as instruments for propagating and making perpetual human bondage, they cannot be preserved—neither is it desirable that they should. They were designed by their framers, to be instruments of perpetual good; and to change them from this their original design, into instruments of ceaseless evil, is in itself to destroy them; and the obligation to obey them ceases, when their nature is changed by usurpation or corruption.

I do not say these things by way of menace, but as simple, fundamental truths, as necessary in the science of government, as are axioms in mathematics. But, sir, the preservation of this union and constitution, does not lie in force, but in the preparation of the hearts of the people. There is no better preparation for these, than a revival of that sentiment of veneration and affection for our fathers, which in individuals, is the highest possible development of a great character. Patriotism itself, that first duty of the citizen, may be said to consist in the sum of our individual affections and veneration for our fathers. That sum of individual sentiments, constitutes the national sentiment of patriotism. To that spirit I appeal for the adjustment of all our internal troubles, both political and sectional. In that spirit, I shall endeavor to retrace our steps to the period when our constitution and union were brought into existence, and to persuade my fellow members to accompany me in the same spirit, to a short communing with the mighty dead. In that spirit alone, can we calm the agitated waters of political strife, either in this Hall or among our constituents.

To this end, I shall exhibit the fruits of their

was an irrepressible love of personal freedom, as one of the inherent, indestructible rights of all human beings unconvicted of crime, is proved. And, sir, I declare it here, as the truth of history, that so long as this great truth was cherished, and practically recognised by the federal government, in all matters within the legitimate cognizance of its several departments, there was never manifested any dangerous indication of disloyalty to the union. No, sir, disunion is the whelp of the spirit of slavery propagandism; and since that evil spirit has possessed southern politicians, and their alliance has been perfected with our northern slave democracy, there has been no peace for the union; and, in the providence of God, there never can, and never ought to be, any "peace to the wicked," either in union, or out of it.

But, Mr. Chairman, having proven the allied forces of the slavery propagandists of the south and the slave democracy of the free states to be hostile to the only enduring element of union, liberty! as received and understood by our fathers "in the times that tried men's souls," I proceed now to show, that the same allies are equally hostile to the same essential element of union under the constitution of the United States. Mr. Chairman, I first call the attention of the committee to the preamble to the constitution. Hear it:

"We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution for the United States of America."

There, Mr. Chairman, whoever, after reading that declaration of the objects and purposes for which the constitution of the United States, was framed and adopted by the people of the United States, shall assert, that the extension and perpetuation of slavery, or the exaltation of slavery into a "domestic institution," to be placed side by side with the institution of husband and wife, parent and child, &c., as is attempted by the slave democracy *in and by* the Nebraska bill, and as is asserted in every alternate breath, by each slaveholder and slave democrat in congress and out of it—I say, sir, every such person charges the men who framed, and the people who adopted the constitution, with *deliberate and wicked LYING*, or else with a stupidity so nearly absolute, as to relieve them of moral responsibility for what they did assert.

Our fathers set this preamble at the threshold of the constitution as a lamp, as well to dispel darkness from the minds of those who *should* attempt to enter this great edifice of FREE government, as to cast its cheering light through all the compartments of that edifice. They did it, that whoever might hope to find in the constitution a guarantee of slavery, or any form of injustice, might, at the commencement of his search, meet only—"liberty and justice." It was done to take all excuse from that perverse ingenuity which, from the infirmities of human language, might attempt to use the constitution as the slave democracy in congress, and out of it, are now

using it, viz: as an instrument for the extension of slavery into free territory, and as a justification of their pretence, that the constitution *proprio vigore*, carries slavery into all the territories of the United States; or that slavery and liberty are twin brethren, and must be brought, as such, simultaneously into the union, or not be born at all; or that other piece of stupidity or perverseness, that the territories are the common property of the people of all the states, and therefore the slaveholder has the right to enter all or any of the federal territories with his slaves—or that other, and last for the present, assertion, that there exists a certain equality among all the states, which authorizes the people of the slave states to take their slaves, as property, into the territories, but does not authorize the people of the free states to enter the territories and exclude slavery therefrom—a sort of equality of states, which warrants the establishment of nuisances and social curses in the territories, but takes from the people the power to abate such nuisances.

Another design of the preamble to the constitution was, to enable the people to detect that class of demagogues who, under the cloak of devotion to the union, are trying to force or cheat the people of the free states, into "carrying the flag and keeping step to the music of the coffin gang," as it pursues its dead march from the old and slave-cursed states, to make its halt in the now free territories, there to leave forever the mildew of its blighting nature.

But the preamble to the constitution, is not the constitution. This must speak with its own voice, but it must nevertheless speak in the spirit of its preamble, otherwise both preamble and constitution are a hypocrisy and a delusion. The constitution as framed by the convention, gave no power to any department of the government to make a slave of a free man, or to convert free territory into slave territory. The federal government, under the constitution, prior to the amendments, was utterly impotent, either to make or hold a slave, or to give authority to others to make or hold slaves. The unamended constitution was precisely that, neither more nor less than its authors made it; but they did not make it a slave constitution. They did not *omit* a clause in that instrument, authorizing slaveholding by accident, but by design. Mr. Madison, one of the chief artificers of the constitution, assures us that they did not intend that the constitution should even disclose the shameful fact, that there existed such a crime and disgrace in the United States as slavery.

But to "make assurance doubly sure," and as it were, "to take a bond of fate," those great and good men, for the vindication of their own fame as the friends of liberty and justice, and jealous lest, through the degeneracy of after times, and almost as if foreseeing the apostacy of the slave democracy of the present day, immediately on the adoption of the constitution, as framed by the convention, the first congress assembled under it, proposed divers amendments, the chief objects of which were, to *negative* all power in congress, which bad men might claim to be implied in the original constitution, to make

oppressive laws, or to wrest from men their inalienable rights.

First amendment.—"Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

Mr. Chairman, it is very true that this prohibition against violating the freedom of speech and the press by congress, does not affect the states as such, and consequently the freedom of speech and the press in the states, must depend on state laws; but there is not a slave state in the union, with the exception perhaps of Delaware, where this *great fundamental element of civil liberty*, either practically, by *licensed mobbing* or by *state laws*, is not utterly annihilated. The *principle of slavery*, viz: property in man, *will not bear discussion*; neither dare it "come to the light, lest its deeds should be reprov'd." But the discussion of the right to property in "the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air," in the earth, and the products of the earth, the air and the waters, are as freely discussed in slave states as in free states. The reason for this is too obvious to require illustration. But *apropos* of this, we have all heard of the celebrated laws of the bogus legislature of Kansas for the *protection of property* in slaves. If not, the masterly speech of my friend from Indiana [Mr. COLFAX] will throw abundant light on these *pandects* of Atchison, Stringfellow, Shannon, and company. But super-fiendish as are these infamous acts in the form of laws, against the great right of free speech and a free press, we have nevertheless, the assurance of a senator from Mississippi, [Mr. ADAMS,] that the Kansas laws are by no means peculiar; but are *such as are usual* and necessary in the slave states. In alluding to these Kansas laws, he says:

"They have passed just such laws—not perhaps exactly in the language, but substantially the same—as the states maintaining the institution of slavery have found it necessary to pass to sustain their rights. In the state in which I have the honor to live, we prohibit the circulation of incendiary pamphlets, as they are called, which mean nothing more nor less than the language objected to and provided against in this act. Men are punished for it; so in nearly all the states where the institution of slavery exists. The mistake which is made here is in reference to the question which I have already called to the attention of the senate. These people have acted in conformity with the provisions of the act of congress."

Now sir, admitting that slave states, for the support of the barbarism of slavery, within their own limits, may enact laws thus cruel, unjust, and disgusting; still this legislative assembly of Kansas, is but the CREATURE of which the congress of the United States is the CREATOR—the mere instrument, made by congress, to make and execute laws for Kansas, in the place of, and for congress. Therefore, it can pass no law which congress, by the constitution of the United States, is prohibited from passing. Hence all these beastly, disgusting, and infamous slave laws of Kansas, are a nullity and a nuisance, by the *express pro-*

visions of the first article of the amendments to the constitution of the United States. But what care this slave democracy, for the constitution of the United States, where that stands in the way of the extension of human slavery? Just nothing at all! And hence every nerve of this mis-begotten administration, is strained to uphold these unconstitutional and scandalous laws. The whole military force of the government, is put in requisition by the slave democracy, to dragoon the people of Kansas, into submission to these laws; and men, good, and wise, and just men are to be tried by slave democratic judges and juries, and convicted and executed as traitors, for resistance to these laws, the forcible execution of which, is TREASON, and ought to subject the president, his cabinet, and all advising to their execution, to the trial, and sentence, and DOOM OF TRAITORS.

Second amendment.—"The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

In this amendment the same SPIRIT OF LIBERTY is developed, as was so apparent in the preceding. The right to "keep and bear arms," is thus guaranteed, in order that if the liberties of the people should be assailed, the means for their defence should be in their own hands.

But this right of the people of the United States, of which the free-state settlers of Kansas are a part, has been torn from them by the treasonable violence of this ill-starred administration, which is used as the mere pack-mule of the slave democracy.

Fourth amendment.—"The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated; and no warrants shall issue but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized."

In utter contempt of this clause of the constitution, this guilty administration, by its less guilty tools in Kansas, has been sacking cities, burning houses, and carrying desolation, murder, and rapine, over that fair territory.

Fifth amendment.—"No person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law."

It should be always borne in mind, that the constitution of the United States was intended, first, to confer power on the government of the United States; second, to limit the power thus conferred; and third, to withdraw certain powers from the individual states.

Nowhere in the constitution of the United States is the word "slave" used. Wherever in the constitution slaves are alluded to, or rather, are supposed to be alluded to, they are not named as slaves, but as persons, just as all the people, individually, are included in the term "persons," in the fifth amendment above quoted. Mr. Madison, called the father of the constitution, informs us that the banishment of the term "slave" from the text of the constitution, was not the result of accident, but was done *purposely*, and with the intention of excluding the idea, that man can hold his fellow-man as property, the affirmative of which, would be implied in the term "slave."

Mr. Chairman, if the framers of the constitution cast the word, "slave," as a reprobate, out of the constitution, because its definition is "a man held as property," how dare our bogus democrats and slaveholders interpolate that venerated instrument, with the execrable term? No, sir; the argument is irresistible, that wherever the authority of the United States, in any of its departments, whether legislative, executive, or judicial, is invoked to interfere against a "person" held as a slave by the laws of any state, the United States must treat such slave as a person; and if such person's "life, liberty, or property," may be brought in jeopardy by authority of the United States, that "person," however humble, however bruised or trodden under foot by other states or other nations, is entitled to "due process of law," which, by the common consent of all—whether slaveholders, slave democrats, or republicans—is admitted to be a "trial by jury, according to the course of the common law." Thus, sir, the thrice-execrable "fugitive slave law," with its catchpole bevy of slave-hunting commissioners and deputy marshals, becomes a nullity and nuisance—the villanous concoction of slaveholding usurpation and doughfaced subserviency—and dissolves like stubble before the devouring fire.

Now, sir, I flatter myself that I have vindicated the memory and the fame of our fathers who bequeathed to us a constitution based on justice—a union knit and held together by the gentle, genial, humanizing spirit of God-given, and God-honoring freedom. I have proven by facts and arguments which no sophistry can overthrow, that the spirit which created the constitution and the union, was the love of personal liberty under just and humane law. The same spirit which created must preserve the constitution and the union; but the spirit which has taken possession of the slaveholders, and their base tools, the slave democracy of the free states, is the unclean spirit of slavery propagandism and perpetuation; and just as sure as animal life perishes in mephitic gases, so sure is it, that this constitution and union *must perish*, when smothered in the foul embraces of these allies of human slavery.

Mr. Chairman, I would respectfully ask of our union-saving physicians and craftsmen, whether in their opinion, the health of the union is improving under the slavery-extension nostrums which they have been administering to it now for some twenty years past?—whether their last dose of Nebraska bitters, bids fair to improve the health or prolong the life of their unhappy patient? To me, sir, though I am no political doctor, and my opinion is therefore, of little value, I confess that the writhings and pantings of the patient, and the agitated and anxious countenances of the doctors and nurses, do not look like a favorable working of the medicines; and I would respectfully suggest a change of prescriptions. When you took your patient in hand, some twenty years ago, it was blessed with a robust constitution, seemingly calculated to outlive all the quacks and grandames who had taken its cure in hand, and only needed to be wisely let alone, to outlive the years of Methuselah himself. But you could not rest. You pronounced

the union in danger, and again commenced administering your doses of pro-slavery agitation. In 1836 you "saved" the union by "Pinckney's resolution." That was by laying "anti-slavery petitions on the table without reading or reference." You pronounced your patient "cured"—still, to all but the doctors, it was now evidently made sick by your medicine. You nevertheless tried the same remedy in 1838, in another resolution of the same character. In 1842 you administered another pro-slavery dose, in the attempt to expel from the House, the venerable ex-president Adams, merely for presenting a petition to congress. The union was thereby again saved, however; still, strange to say, it grew more and more feeble under these repeated salvations; and again in 1843, you saved it by expelling from the House, my venerable friend and colleague, [Mr. GIDDINGS,] for offering a resolution in respect to slave trading under the flag of the union. But, like all your past quackery, this also, only made bad worse. But the union made out to keep above ground until 1846, when it was again saved by the annexation of the slave state of Texas and the Mexican war, and in 1848, by the acquisition of the new slave territories of New Mexico and Utah, and by the exertions of Colonel Fremont, the free territory of California, making of slave territory 724,000 square miles, and the free territory of California 188,000 square miles: At about the same time, you commenced depleting your patient by a treaty with Great Britain, and the cession to her Majesty of 5° 40' of latitude and 26° of longitude, equal to 774,000 square miles of free territory, to which your slaveholding president had declared the title of the United States to be "clear and unquestioned." Still the union only grew worse, and in 1852, was again declared by the pro-slavery and slaveholding doctors, to be "as good as dead." So you called in both whig and democratic doctors to a consultation over your old patient, the union. The council of doctors were unanimously of the opinion, not only that the patient was very sick, but, in addition thereto, was badly wounded—having "seven bleeding wounds" which were to be stanchd at once, or the case was hopeless. As usual on those occasions, more concessions to slavery were prescribed; California was graciously permitted to come into the union as a free state; Texas was consigned to the dissecting room, to be cut into *only five* slave states; and New Mexico and Utah were to be slave or free at their option. With this came a withdrawal of the slaveholders' license to convert the District of Columbia into a slave stable. But above all, this arrangement was declared final—was to be the *very last* dose of patent medicine to be administered—the "all-healing ointment" for the convalescent union.

But did the union recover on taking this dose of "finality" physic? The doctors told us it was cured—that in this new ointment, of letting the slaveholders have their own way in the territories, the union was restored—was "good as new." But, alas! Mr. Chairman, however well it might fare with the union, the case was different with the doctors. In curing their patient, they killed

themselves—every mother's son of them. But, again, alas for the poor union, and for the infallibility of political nostrum venders! in less than four years from this perfect, this "final" recovery, the union was found again in hysterics. There was discovered a dreadful "tender spot" at the junction of the slave state of Missouri and the free territory of Kansas. The democratic faculty of political quacks was hurriedly summoned. What in the world could be the matter with the union now? Well, it was found by them to be dying of a poison called "Missouri compromise," administered by the doctors in charge of her in 1820. This was the unanimous opinion of the doctors. The union, with that Missouri compromise, had taken an over dose of freedom, and it must be extracted from her system, as the only and the infallible remedy. Yes, sir; the slave democracy have, for all the diseases of the union, one, and only one, remedy; and that is, to bleed her of every drop of freedom left in her veins. This, sir, is the course of surgery prescribed and administered by the democratic doctors for a union nursed in the lap, and nurtured at the bosom of freedom! Feed her with more slavery, more slave states, more slave territory; and, when you cease to have enough of these articles on hand, why, then, *steal more* from your neighbor nations, after the prescription of the Ostend conference of democratic doctors, of which Mr. Buchanan, the nominee of the slave democracy for the presidency, was the acknowledged head, and Mr. Soulé, of Louisiana, the fitting tail. Steal it, sir, with a relish. Go at it, sir, wolf and lamb fashion. Says the wolf, drinking in the stream, to the lamb, drinking in the same stream, below the wolf, "Sir, if your drinking in the stream below me does seriously endanger the riling of the water where I am drinking, then, by every law, human and divine, I shall be justified in wresting you from the brook;" and, so saying, seizes and devours the lamb. Go at it wolf fashion, O slave democracy, and take Cuba; it will be needed in a little while as medicine for a union sick of too much freedom and too little slavery. Here is the warrant, sir, under the hands of your slave democratic casuists and candidate.

"Does Cuba in the possession of Spain seriously endanger our internal peace and the existence of our cherished union? Should this question be answered in the affirmative, then by every law, human and divine, we shall be justified in *wresting it from Spain*, if we possess the power; and this upon the very same principle that would justify an individual in tearing down the burning house of his neighbor, if there were no other means of preventing the flames from destroying his own home. Under such circumstances, we ought neither to count the cost nor regard the odds which Spain might enlist against us. We forbear to enter into the question, whether the present condition of the island would justify such a measure. We should, however, be recreant to our duty, be unworthy of our gallant forefathers, and commit base treason against our posterity, should we permit Cuba to be Africanized, and become a second St. Domingo, with all its attendant horrors to the

' white race, and suffer the flames to extend to our
' own neighboring shores, seriously to endanger,
' or actually to consume, the fair fabric of our
' union. We hear that the course and current
' of events are rapidly tending toward such a
' catastrophe. * * *

" JAMES BUCHANAN.

" JOHN Y. MASON.

" PIERRE SOULE.

"*Aix La Chapelle, October 18, 1854.*"

Oh yes, we will need Cuba; we do need it now; and Central America, why we shall need that by the time we can get it, and that will be as soon as Walker and his filibusters shall put slavery fairly under way there. Have it! why not have it when such a doctor of divinity as "Old Buck" says we are entitled to it by divine law? There, Mr. Chairman, is your president, who will be his own chaplain, and do his own *preying*.

But, Mr. Chairman, this is getting slightly, but no more than that, in advance of the "wagon." Let us return to the handiwork of the slave democracy for the *advent* of another dispensation of harmony—another "finality" to succeed the old and worn out "finality" of 1850. The scriptures say, that the "sinner an hundred years old shall be accursed;" but a slave democratic "finality" is in as sad a plight, at four years old, as the sinner at "an hundred." So they cursed their old "finality" of 1850, and introduced another in 1854, by the repeal of the Missouri compromise; which, in the short period of two years, has deserved and received more cursing, by friends and foes, than it of 1850, or all its predecessors put together. Indeed, this last seems to have had a bad effect even according to the democratic doctors themselves, inasmuch as it was a surfeit of slavery, which has resulted in the "black (republican) vomit."

But seriously, Mr. Chairman, what I have spoken ironically is nevertheless, not an unfaithful picture of our present condition as a nation, under the wicked and imbecile attempt of the slaveholders and the slave democracy, to strengthen the institutions of freedom, by nursing and feeding them on the garbage of human bondage. God knows, Mr. Chairman, that I desire, as earnestly as human nature can long for any earthly blessing, the perpetuity of the union of these states, just so long as the union shall subserve the ends for which our fathers formed it; but my convictions, that the accumulated perversions of those ends and objects, will if repeated, at no distant period, subvert the union, are as strong and earnest as my desires for its perpetuity. Sir, I have no faith in the conservative efficacy of anything for states and nations, but the healing virtues of justice, truth, and liberty.

Mr. Chairman, it was my design, before resuming my seat, to say something on the causes which have led to the disgraceful state of things in Kansas—a state so repugnant to every sentiment of national pride, to say nothing of justice, peace, or even common decency? Sir, there is involved in these Kansas troubles, something low, vulgar, dirty, savoring of the fish-market, on the part of the administration, mingled in the causes and accomplishments of these shameful scenes—much, sir, of the low, disgusting arrogance of the

overseer, in his brutal efforts to subdue some refractory slave. "We mean to subdue you," is the ebullition of a vulgar nature, elevated by means of some "villain service," to an unexpected height; and it is the mingling of this base spirit with executive power in Kansas, which has been at the root of all these shameful scenes.

But before going further on this subject, I wish to say a few words, sir, on this new-fangled doctrine of squatter or popular sovereignty, as applicable to the promiscuous settlement of new territories, by slaveholders and persons opposed, either on conscientious, economical, or any other grounds, to the holding of slaves. As a simple question of statesmanship, waiving for the time, the moral question involved in the extension and perpetuity of slavery, no congregation of blockheads, ever committed a more egregious, or a more shallow blunder. Why, popular sovereignty implies, not only the *right*, but imposes the *necessity* for the most absolutely free discussion by the press, and by the exercise of perfect freedom of speech by the people. How can popular institutions be rightly established, without the exercise of those fundamental rights? The negative of this question, strikes at the root of democratic institutions. The FREE STATE POPULAR SOVEREIGN must have the same right to discuss the slaveholder's right to his slave, as a moral, religious, and economical question, as he has to discuss the policy of incorporating banks, granting city charters, or establishing the legal height and strength of a division fence. The moment this right is taken from him, that moment, he ceases to be a "popular sovereign." But slavery can bear no such discussion. The slave must not be told that he has, by the law of nature, the right to seek his own well-being in his own way, doing no harm to others—that he has a right to labor, and to receive, use, and dispose of the fruits of his labor—that his wife and children are his own, and not another's.

Sir, the single free state squatter sovereign, who is able to plant himself down in a territory, and exercise these undoubted rights of squatter sovereignty, would, by this simple process of truth-telling, expel every slave and slaveholder from 100,000 square miles of territory. But the slaveholding squatter sovereign must be authorized to silence all such "damnable heresies," coming from his free state brother sovereign; or slavery must slink away from the territories, like ghosts at the dawn of morning. But the statesmanship of the Nebraska bill is, to set free state squatter sovereign, against slaveholding squatter sovereign, contending for freedom against slavery and slavery against freedom, in the territories, openly, with free speech and a free press.

The slaveholders understand this perfectly; and hence, the inherent and fundamental right of freedom of speech and the press, does not, and cannot exist in slaveholding communities. This is a necessity of despotic governments, it is more than a necessity of despotism, it is in itself, the essence of despotism. And, sir, there is not a more morbidly suspicious, cruel, revengeful, or lawless despotism on the face of the earth, than

the nightmare of slavery, which has settled down upon the people of the slaveholding states, with the exception of perhaps two or three of these states. Why sir, there is more freedom of speech and of the press to-day, and more personal safety in the exercise of such freedom, at Vienna, St. Petersburg, Paris, or Rome, in an attack and exposure of the despotism which reigns supreme over those cities, than there is at Richmond, Charleston, Milledgeville, or Mobile, to attack and expose the slaveholding despotisms which rule over these cities with a rod of iron. Sir, there are probably more citizens, born and nurtured in the slave states, now in exile from their native states for the exercise of freedom of speech and the press, against the despotism of slaveholding, than there are from Austria, Russia, France, or the Two Sicilies, for the exercise of the same rights, against the despotisms which crush those nations.

Why, sir, free speech and a free press, would, in less than a decade, drive slavery from every slave state in the union. It would exclude slavery from every territory belonging to the United States, in half that time. This truth, the men of 1820 saw clearly; and they saw that slavery and liberty could not dwell together on the same soil, that these two must separate or fight. They therefore drew a line of separation between them, and instantly their territorial dissensions ceased. But the slave democracy of our times, could not rest, while a foot of soil was dedicated to freedom. So they threw down the bars which our fathers had raised between freedom and slavery, and instantly, these two mortal foes are at each other's throats, just as every sensible and honest man knew they must be. This is the finale of the squatter-sovereignty humbug, as a stroke of statesmanship; and it is but another illustration of the maxim, that a child or a fool may destroy in an hour, what it required the wisdom and the labor of ages to construct.

The great procuring cause of these troubles, we all know to have been, the repeal of the Missouri compromise; and the cause of this repeal was, the lust of slavery propagandism, operating on mercenary northern politicians. But the efforts of the slave democracy, are now directed to the finding of some pretext by which, they may extricate themselves, by diverting the public attention to matters which may seem to implicate others. To accomplish this unworthy object, this slave democracy has made the Massachusetts emigrant aid society its "harp of a thousand strings." Venting execrations on this never-quieted ghost, constitutes the staple of the presidential proclamations and messages, as well as of all the harangues, tirades, speeches, and reports, of the slave democracy, in and out of congress. The president also, expresses his regrets that Governor Reeder, in his Reading speech, had not dwelt "a little more at large on the emigrant aid societies." All the outrages of the Missouri borderers, their forays into Kansas, seizing ballot-boxes, expulsion of free-state voters from the polls, and from the territory; the election of a bogus legislature of Missourians by a Missouri mob; the sacking and burning of Law-

rence; the disarming and expulsion of peaceful free-state settlers by United States troops, and the arrest, imprisonment, and nameless persecutions of innocent men for treason; the arming of bands of lawless, worthless vagabonds, from the slave states, and enrolling them in the militia of the territory, thus, under color of law, turning loose, to rob, murder, and ravish, without restraint—are all justified and charged over to the account of the emigrant aid society, for its audacity in presuming to grant free-state settlers facilities for entering the territory of Kansas. This action of that society, is the sole justification set up by all, from the president of the United States, and grave senators, down, down, to the little “we-mean-to-subdue-you” scrub orator, commanding the advance guard of the free-state slave democracy.

Sir, I make no apology for any exertions, however great, on the part of the people of the free states, or any one or more of them, to *preoccupy* Kansas with free-state settlers. Their fault or guilt in that regard, has not been *excess*, but the *lack* of exertion to that end. Why, sir, did the slaveholders and their sham democratic allies presume that all spirit, all devotion to the constitution and the union—nay, all-self respect, all manhood even, had so forsaken that people, that they would give up Kansas a prey to slavery, through the treachery of those whose special duty it was, to guard the interests of freedom, without availing themselves of the poor and only chance left for liberty on that soil—the chance of outvoting the tools of slavery, by *bona fide* settlers from the free states? Well, sir, if they did, it was their own folly. They had no reason to expect such pusillanimity, such degradation from the sturdy and intelligent yeomanry and mechanics of the free states, whatever they may have had reason to expect from such specimens of the cringing sycophants and doughfaces as had woimed themselves into congress and the executive from those States. Nay, sir, *they did not expect it*. They anticipated competition from that quarter. They challenged and defied it. They reasoned in favor of their squatter-sovereignty humbug, by asserting the superior capabilities of the free states over the slave states, for the immediate occupancy of Kansas by free-state settlers. They taunted those of us, who were unwilling to remove this Missouri restriction, with hypocrisy on this very ground, viz: that on their squatter and popular sovereignty theory, the free states had greatly the advantage in the settlement of the territory, over the slave states. Some of them declared that they expected no advantage for slavery by the repeal. Thus Judge Butler, of South Carolina, (Senate, March 22, 1854; Appendix to Congressional Globe, first session Thirty-third Congress, p. 292:)

“If two states should come into the union from them, (Kansas and Nebraska,) it is very certain that not more than one of them could in any possible event be a slaveholding state; and I have not the least idea that even one would be.”

“As far as I am concerned, I must say that I do not expect that this bill is to give us of the

‘south anything, but merely to accommodate something like the sentiment of the south.’”

No, Mr. Chairman, it was, then, “not to make a slave state of Kansas,” but to “accommodate a southern sentiment,” to which the Missouri restriction was offensive. Oh, how gentle then! The velvet foot-falls of the cat, before seizing her prey, were not more soft and unalarming.

But, Mr. Chairman, notwithstanding all this seeming or real disinterestedness (I do not undertake to determine which) on the part of some of the southern men, there were others who did not view it in that light at all.

Mr. BELL, of Tennessee, (May 24, 1854, Appendix, as above, page 939,) alluding to what had been stated in a caucus of the advocates of the repeal of the Missouri compromise, as to the effect of such repeal upon the entrance of slavery into the territories, says:

“But this broad principle of ‘squatter sovereignty’ was not the idea on which the repeal clause of this bill was inserted. I was assured then that the South had some interest in it; that it would secure, practically, a slave territory west of Missouri; that slavery would go into Kansas, when the restriction of 1820 was removed. It was not dwelt on in argument; but my honorable friend from Missouri knows that that view was taken by him, [Atchison], and I differed from him in regard to it. I thought slavery could not go there; the honorable Senator thought it could.

“Mr. ATCHISON. And I think so still.”

This debate, slight as are the glimpses it furnishes, still discloses enough to prove the eager covetings of the slaveholders for Kansas, and that they had already been “led into temptation” in relation to the question, how the territories could be appropriated to the uses of slavery? It was then already the “Naboth’s vineyard” of the slaveholding section of the sham democracy, and they were then, casting about for the means of converting it to the use of slavery. “Atchison thought it could be done,” though Bell doubted. At this conclave, he [Bell] “was assured that the South had some interest in it; that it would secure, practically, a slave territory west of Missouri; that slavery would go into Kansas, when the restriction of 1820 was removed.”

Who that reads that, can doubt that there had been, at that time, a matured conspiracy, of which Atchison was the presiding genius, to repeal the restriction, and instantly to inundate Kansas with slave-breeding emigrants from Missouri? No one can entertain a reasonable doubt, that the sham democrats in congress from the free states, were at that time, advertised of the existence of such a conspiracy, and had been instructed by their leaders, the slaveholders, to attempt to convert their constituents to the new faith, that opening the territory of Kansas to the legal introduction of slaves, did not tend in the least, to make it a slave state; that the grand discovery of squatter sovereignty, would set all these things right, as by the power of magic.

For this conspiracy, there was doubtless a programme, which subsequent developments indi-

cate to have been something after this wise: The Missouri restriction was to be repealed, under pretence of "accommodating a southern sentiment." Southern gentlemen were to affect, not to seem anxious for the entrance of slavery into the territory, nor to anticipate any such result. The people of the free states were to be brought to jubilate over the new-born squatter-sovereignty faith, as a charm or fetish which would thereafter forever, secure them against all further political evil. In the mean time, Atchison was to organize the Cossacks of the Missouri borders, and take possession in the name of slavery and squatter sovereignty, before the free state laggards could draw on their boots.

It was probably in view of this programme, or something in substance the same, that their ablest debaters in congress, were selected to open the fire upon the "abolitionists," as the *opponents* of the repeal were called by its advocates. This was commenced in gallant style by Mr. Breckinridge, the now democratic candidate for vice president. In that speech, the "harp of a thousand strings," "squatter or popular sovereignty," was played on by the great musician to the following tune:

"But, again, cannot the North, with her overwhelming numbers, compete with us on these new theatres in the race of settlement and civilization, and must she not only violate the constitution by shutting out half the states, common property holders with her; but, in the name of liberty, outrage liberty by erecting a despotism over the territories?"

In the pamphlet edition of this speech, the question is put in this form:

"Cannot you, of the free states, on this theory of 'popular sovereignty,' compete successfully with us of the slave states for supremacy in the territories—you, who have some fifteen millions of free population, while we, of the slave states, have less than one half of that number? If you cannot, then what becomes of your boasted superiority of free over slave institutions?"—*Globe Appendix, first session Thirty-third Congress, p. 442.*

This was the tune pitched by the "chief musician," and was responded to by the whole choir of under-performers, as well in congress, and by the press, as on the stump. Sir, it was an open challenge to the intelligent, enterprising, and industrious people of the free states, to enter the lists with the slave states, in the peaceful settlement of the territory, on the newly-discovered principle of "squatter sovereignty." By this it was implied, that there should be "a fair field and no favor." It was a distinct invitation to set free-state emigration against slave-state emigration, in which fair play was due from each party towards the other, and when, at least on the part of the free states, no unfairness was premeditated, and none anticipated from those who gave the challenge. No treacherous senator was suspected as being on the ground, digging pitfalls, laying ambushments and assembling armed bands to waylay, rob, murder, and drive back, free-state settlers, who had honorably entered the lists in their own tournament of peaceful set-

tlement. But the damning proof is out before the sun, that while gentlemen of the south, were giving out these invidious challenges on this floor, their colaborers, or at least one of them, in this sad work of breaking time-honored compacts, and he, at the time a member of the other house of congress, was playing foul with the very men who were attracted to Kansas, by these challenges of open and fair competition. It is sad, indeed, to suspect that this challenge was given with a knowledge, that successful competition in the peaceful settlement of Kansas, by free-state men, would be defeated by fraud, or repelled by force; and yet the proof of the affirmative is almost irresistible.

But the gentleman from Georgia, [Mr. STEPHENS,] the "fiery Tybalt" of slavery propagandism, was still more arrogant and defiant in the tone and temper of his challenges to free-state men, to try the efficacy of "squatter sovereignty," in the peaceful settlement of Kansas.

Mr. STEPHENS, (February 27, 1854, pamphlet edition of speech printed at office of *Sentinel*, Washington, District of Columbia, page 11,) speaking of the prospect of a free state being made out of Kansas, says:

"Why should you not be willing to remove this question forever from Congress, and leave it to the people of the Territories, according to the compromise of 1850? You have greatly the advantage of us in population. The white population of the United States is now over twenty millions. Of this number, the free states have over two to one, compared with the south. There are only a little over three million slaves.

"If immigration into the territories, therefore, should be assumed to go on in the ratio of population, we must suppose that there would be near seven white persons to one slave at least, and of the seven, two from the free states, to one from the south. With such an advantage, are you afraid to trust this question with your own people—men reared under the influence of your own boasted superior institutions? With all the prejudices of birth and education against us, are you afraid to let them judge for themselves? Are your 'free-born sons, who never breathed the tainted air of slavery,' such nincompoops, that they cannot be trusted out, without their 'mothers' leave?"

Mr. Chairman, this is not only a challenge to the people of the free states, to enter the lists with the slave states, in the settlement of Kansas, but it is a challenge couched in the language of contempt and defiance. Its tone and manner were a warning to all free-state men, that the repeal of the Missouri compromise, was then, a foregone conclusion; and that if Kansas was rescued from the doom of slavery, it must be by taking up the glove thus insolently thrown in their faces. Comparing the achievements, hitherto, of the two sections of country—the slave and the free—in the successful settlement of new states, it was as rash as it was insolent.

The haughty, confident, and even defiant tone assumed by the south towards free-state men, in relation to the settlement of Kansas, was then a mystery. It seemed at the time, wholly gratui-

tous; but the disclosures of the organization of secret associations by the slaveholders on the borders of the territory, in connection with the machinations of the then vice president in the same quarter, constitute more than a suspicion, they amount to a strong presumptive evidence, that the purpose of repealing the compromise, and of making Kansas a slave state, were conceived simultaneously, as events inseparably connected, and to be accomplished at every hazard. They prove further, that the shallow and delusive notion of "squatter sovereignty," was held up merely to gull a set of shallow, bigoted, and reckless partisans in the free states, as mackerel are caught with red rags.

In this view of the case, I ask honest men, north and south, were not these challenges, these taunts, this contempt and insolence, sufficient provocation to put the people of the free states to their mettle—those of them, I mean, who prefer freedom to slavery? Was it wrong in them—nay, was it not right—nay, was it not a duty which they owed to their principles, (if they had any,) to prove themselves no "nincompoops," to use the select phrase of the gentleman from Georgia; but to show themselves equal at least, in intelligence, energy, enterprise, and wealth, to the slaveholders who had thus insultingly challenged them to the trial? Why, sir, emigrant aid societies, as agencies for the colonization of new and distant countries, are as natural a result of superior wealth, intelligence, and enterprise, as railroads and steamboats are evidence of enterprise, wealth, and skill, superior to those which had only advanced to the invention of the hand-barrow, horse-cart, and flat-boat. Sir, the slave democracy, northern or southern, might as reasonably denounce free-state emigrants to Kansas, for not making their journeys thither, in mule-drawn wagons or scow-boats, instead of journeying by steamboats and railways, as for availing themselves of the superior advantages offered by emigrant aid societies.

Nevertheless, there has not been an utterance from those hostile to freedom in Kansas, from the leviathans and *pigmy giants* of the slave democracy in the other end of the capitol, to the president and his cabinet, at the other end of the avenue; or from the guests of the grog-shops, or even the street loafers, the purpose of which has not been to conceal or justify their breach of the nation's plighted faith, and to shelter themselves from the storm of public odium and contempt, for their treason to the constitution and laws of their country, as well as to their own professed principles of "squatter sovereignty," by cursing the "New England emigrant aid society," by "bell, book, and candle." The slave democratic press, at the four cardinal and all intermediate points of the compass, has groaned with these execrations.

But when thus insultingly challenged to prove their superiority in wealth, intelligence, and enterprise, (if they possessed them,) by taking an even chance with the slave states in the peaceful colonization of Kansas; and when fairly beaten in the trial, as the slave states have been, it is not only unreasonable, but it is infamous, to turn upon their successful competitors, and charge them with foul play; and not only so, but to re-

sort themselves to the foulest, most infamous, and treasonable measures, to recover what they had lost in the field of open and fair competition. And, sir, I charge the slave democracy with all the mischiefs (and God knows they are but too numerous) which have already resulted, and which, in the dark and stormy future, may result, from this shameless breach of public faith, in the repeal of the Missouri compromise, in order to force the institution of slavery on territory dedicated to freedom for more than the third of a century. Sir, to talk of acquiescence now, in this breach of plighted faith; and this still more aggravated offence of expelling, by the army of the United States, peaceable and innocent emigrants to a territory to which the slave democracy had invited them, is a manifestation of weakness and cowardice which must and will, only invite renewed aggressions. In point of morals, it is as culpable, and in point of policy, more imbecile if possible, than that which threw open the territories to the influx of slavery.

A few words in conclusion, Mr. Chairman, to those political adventurers, patriots, doughfaces, or what not, from the free states, who at this day, attach themselves to the fortunes of the slave democracy, or to slavery propagandists of any school. I would very respectfully ask of those gentlemen, whether, as a political investment, barring wear and tear of conscience, the business of extending human slavery, and cribbing and confining human liberty, has not, of late, been rather overdone by the rush of political adventurers into this field of speculation?—whether the compensation is adequate to the excessive labor required in this kind of service? Formerly, before slavery extension became the main business of the holders of office in the government, the president and his cabinet might hold out sound and strong for at least eight years, and subordinate officers indefinitely. But now, since the extension of slavery into free territory, has become almost the sole business of the officers of the federal government, from the president downwards, so excessive and exhausting is the service exacted of its servants by the slave democracy, that in one or two years at the longest, these officers become so worn down and fagged out, that the people are as anxious to be rid of them, as a cleanly housewife would be, to be clear of a gang of strolling beggars, infected with measles, small-pox, or vermin.

Mr. Chairman, mankind in general intuitively despise traitors. They do this, even though they may love the treason, or its fruits. This, sir, is a law of our moral nature, all-pervading, and indispensable in the present condition of humanity. This law of our moral being, addressing itself to one of the most powerful affections of our nature, the love of approbation, serves as one of the strongest checks from universal treachery to those, to whom we are under moral obligations alone. So strong is the hold which this law takes of men, controlled by no "higher law," that when the traitor returns to receive applause from those who reap the fruits of his treason, the applause he covets, is often turned to loathing and unsuppressed disgust. Milton, sir, with his luxuriant imagination, has described the force of

this sentiment, in his description of the reception of Satan by his subject fiends, on his return from the ruin of our first parents.

Satan is described as addressing, with regal pomp, the infernal sanhedrim, and giving them a narration of his adventures in paradise, and his triumph, and its consequents at some unset future period :

“I am to bruise his heel ;

His seed (*when* is not set) shall bruise my head.
A world, who would not purchase with a bruise,
Or much more grievous pain? Ye have th' account
Of my performance: what remains, ye gods,—
But *up*, and enter now into full bliss?
So having said, awhile he stood expecting
Their universal shout and high applause
To fill his ear; when, contrary, he hears
On all sides, from innumerable tongues,
A dismal, universal hiss, the sound
Of public scorn.”

—————“Thus was th' applause they meant
Turned to exploding hiss, triumph to shame.
Cast on themselves from their own mouths.”

It seems to me, sir, that if gentlemen from the free states, who have been candidates or aspirants for the presidency, or who may become such hereafter, would reflect a little upon the fortunes of those who have tried the experiment, cannot but be convinced, that a too eager subserviency to the interests of the slavery extensionists, is not the surest guarantee of success. Such subserviency is treachery to the interests of the people of the free states, and the people of those states see and understand this much more clearly than those time-servers and tricksters imagine. No man at the north, however great his administrative talent, or however triumphant his popularity for the time, can be guilty of an open betrayal of the interest of freedom on any pretence however plausible, without a ruinous blow to his popularity with his free-state constituency. There are too many common schools, too many newspapers read, too many intelligent and well-read

men among the laboring masses, not to render a double-dealing and ruinous policy on the question of slavery extension, fatal to the aspirations of such politicians. The living wrecks of such navigators, are too numerously strewed along the beach of the political sea, not to be a warning to the whole crew, officers as well as mariners. It would be discourteous in me to name them; but I would invite you to run over, in your mind, the number of such unfortunates since '1844, inclusive. The task of Sisyphus was a hard one; but the task of a dough-face, seeking the presidency, is little, if any less onerous. If he makes shift to roll his stone up the slave-state side of the hill, down it rolls on the free-state side; and so *vice versa*.

If his truckling to the slave power, has fitted him for the uses of the slavery propagandists, he is ruined with the friends of freedom; and if ruined with these, the slaveholders cannot use him, however much they may desire to do so. This is now the case with the present incumbent of the presidential office. It is the case with every prominent free-state aspirant to that office in the ranks of the slave democracy, or of the national Americans, as they ironically style themselves; and “killed by an over dose of slavery propagandism,” may be justly written over the political grave of each of them, as a most truthful and appropriate epitaph. Let all politicians of uncracked reputation in the free states, be warned by these examples, and remember the reception of Satan, even among his own fallen crew; for the reception of the pro-slavery politician of the free states, with his slaveholding friends, is as real an ordination of Providence, in the course of nature, as are the hisses with which Satan was received by his fallen crew, according to the paintings of the poet's imagination, in the special awards of Divine justice.

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